

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request that the above-identified application be re-examined.

The October 24, 2002, Office Action ("Office Action") rejected Claims 1 and 3-36 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on the teachings of U.S. Patent No. 6,296,567 ("Kudo") taken in view of the teachings of U.S. Patent No. 6,334,815 ("Miyamoto et al."). Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on the teachings of Kudo taken in view of the teachings of U.S. Patent No. 6,042,478 ("Ng") and under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the teachings of Kudo taken in view of the teachings of Miyamoto et al., taken further in view of the teachings of Ng. For the reasons hereinafter set forth, applicants expressly disagree with the rejections set forth in the Office Action.

This amendment corrects certain typographical errors relating to the reference numerals set forth on pages 10 and 11 of the specification. Claim 4 has been amended to correct an antecedent error, and Claims 34-36 have been canceled.

Prior to setting forth the reasons why applicants disagree with the rejections set forth in the Office Action, a brief description of the present invention followed by a brief description of the cited and applied references is set forth. The following discussions of applicants' invention and the cited and applied references are not provided to define the scope or interpretation of any of the claims of this application. Instead, these discussions are provided to help the United States Patent and Trademark Office better appreciate important claim distinctions discussed thereafter.

The Invention

The present invention is directed to a system, method, and data storage medium for sharing information (data) between separately executable programs. In one form, the invention is directed to a system, method, and data storage medium for sharing data between video games. The data sharing system includes a control unit having a processor and a memory coupled to the processor. The memory stores information pertaining to a first program that was previously executed by the processor. The data sharing system also includes a data storage medium that stores a second program executable by the processor. When executed by the processor, the second program retrieves information pertaining to the first program from the memory and utilizes the information pertaining to the first program with the execution of the second program.

U.S. Patent No. 6,296,567 (Kudo)

Kudo is directed to a video game machine that uses a leading game character operated by a game player. The game character can be selected from among a first game character and a

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS^{PLC}
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

second game character. The video game machine includes a recording medium. The recording medium contains a first game content having the first character as a leading game character, a second game content having the second character as a leading game character, and a third game content that can be enabled only when the first and second game contents are mixed. The first and second game contents are provided so that the first and second characters act independently in the same game world. The first and second game contents are independent of each other, but have relevance in that the first game content uses the second character and the second game content uses the first character.

While Kudo does appear to disclose independent first and second game contents formed such that one game content can use a character from the other game content, Kudo does not disclose the subject matter of the present invention described above. Among other things, **Kudo does not disclose a memory for storing information pertaining to a first program that was previously executed by a processor. Nor does Kudo teach a memory for storing information pertaining to a first program that was previously executed by a processor and a data storage medium that stores a second program executable by the processor.** Rather, as clearly shown in FIG. 2, Kudo discloses a recording medium that stores a game program that includes first game content, second game content, and third game content. There is no indication in Kudo as far as applicants have been able to determine that the memory of Kudo is employed to store information pertaining to a first program that was previously executed by a processor for use by a second program when the second program is executed.

U.S. Patent No. 6,334,815 (Miyamoto et al.)

Miyamoto et al. teaches a game system that comprises a first backup data memory for storing backup data obtained by processing a first game program stored in a first game memory by a first processing system included in a first game machine. The game system also comprises a second game machine having a second processing system, accessing circuitry for permitting the second processing system to access the first backup data memory, a second backup data memory provided in association with the second game machine for temporarily storing the backup data read out of the first backup data memory by the second processing system and a second game program memory provided in association with a second game machine for storing a second game program to be processed by the second processing system. The second processing system affects a game associated with the backup data by executing the second game program stored on the second game program memory while utilizing the backup data stored in the second backup data memory.

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS^{PLLC}
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

While, in some respects, Miyamoto et al. appears to disclose certain aspects of the present invention, there are substantial differences. Miyamoto et al. requires two game machines, the first of which obtains backup data, transferring the backup data to a second game machine and utilizing the backup data during the execution of a second game. Miyamoto et al. teaches multiple processors and multiple memories. In contrast, the present invention is directed to a system that includes a control unit having a processor and a memory coupled to the processor for storing information pertaining to a first program that was previously executed by the processor and a data storage medium that stores a second program executable by the processor. When executed by the processor, the second program retrieves information pertaining to the first program from the memory and utilizes the information pertaining to the first program with the execution of the second program. Because the invention employs a common processor, it is substantially less complex than the complex system described in the Miyamoto et al. patent.

U.S. Patent No. 6,042,478 (Ng)

Ng is directed to a hand-held video game system having a microprocessor controller with address and data buses for providing memory access during memory cycles to a plurality of cartridge slots for electrically connecting cartridges containing memory to the address and data buses. An output terminal of the microprocessor controller provides a cartridge-select signal that identifies a first memory-containing cartridge to be accessed during an initial memory cycle with a microprocessor controller controlling the output terminal to change the memory-select signal for transparently accessing a second memory-containing cartridge for a second memory cycle. The cartridge slot may also provide a port for transferring and receiving information over a bi-directional communication link in which a communication cartridge allows communication over the Internet, and allows for interactive play of a video game. Clearly, Ng does not make up for the deficiencies of Kudo and Miyamoto et al. In this regard, it is noted that the Office Action cited Ng not as a primary reference but for its alleged disclosure of verifying the validity of retrieved information before utilizing it. Ng does not teach this subject matter. That is, Ng does not teach the verification of the validity of retrieved information before utilizing it. All Ng teaches is verification of the authenticity of a cartridge, not verification of the validity of retrieved information before utilizing the retrieved information.

Claims 1 and 3-36

As noted above, the Office Action rejected Claims 1 and 3-36 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable in view of the teachings of Kudo taken in view of the teachings of Miyamoto et al. Remarks accompanying this rejection read as follows:

As to claim 1, Kudo teaches a System of Sharing Data (Video Game Machine), Software Programs (Recording Medium 30, Col. 6, Ln. 35-36, Col. 10, Ln. 38-49), a Control Unit ("...game system...", Col. 6, Ln. 335-38), a Processor (CPU 1, Col. 6, Ln. 35-38), a First Program (Col. 10, Ln. 61-67, Col. 12, Ln. 10-30), a Data Storage Medium (Recording Medium 30, Col. 10, Ln. 38-43), a Second Program ("...second game content...", Col. 10, Ln. 38-43), retrieving information pertaining to the first program (Col. 10, Ln. 47-49) and utilizing the information pertaining to the first program with the execution of the second program (Col. 10, Ln. 61-67). Kudo is not explicit with regards to a memory.

Ignoring, for purposes of brevity, whether or not the foregoing is an accurate description of Kudo, clearly, Kudo fails to teach, suggest, or disclose the subject matter of Claim 1 taken as a whole. Thus, Kudo does not render Claim 1 unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). In this regard, Claim 1 reads as follows:

1. A system for sharing data between software programs comprising:
 - (a) a control unit having a processor and a memory coupled to the processor, the memory storing information pertaining to a first program that was previously executed by the processor; and
 - (b) a data storage medium coupleable to the control unit, the data storage medium storing a second program implementable by the processor for:
 - (i) retrieving information pertaining to the first program from the memory; and
 - (ii) utilizing the information pertaining to the first program with the execution of the second program.

Clearly, Kudo does not teach a control unit having a processor and a memory coupled to the processor, **the memory storing information pertaining to a first program that was previously executed by the processor**. While, arguably, Kudo does teach retrieving information pertaining to a first program and use of the information pertaining to the first program when executing a second program, clearly, Kudo does not teach storing information pertaining to a first program that was previously executed by the processor in a memory included in a control unit that also includes a processor that retrieves the information from memory when executing a second program.

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESSTM,A.C.
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

The rejection of Claims 1 and 3-36 includes the following with respect to Miyamoto et al.:

Miyamoto teaches a Memory (Memory Cartridge 15(ROM 15a), Col. 8, Ln. 1-18). It would be obvious to apply the teaching of Miyamoto to the system of Kudo. One would be motivated to make such a modification to provide game title, program data for controlling the display of characters (Col. 8, Ln. 1-7).

While Miyamoto et al. may teach a memory cartridge, neither Kudo nor Miyamoto et al. teaches or suggests how their individual teachings could be combined in any manner, much less the manner recited in Claim 1. Further, even if combinable, the resultant combination would not meet all of the recitations of Claim 1. More specifically, the resultant combination would not include a control unit having a processor and a memory coupled to the processor, the memory storing information pertaining to a first program that was previously executed by the processor. As noted above, this subject matter is not taught at all by Kudo. Nor is it taught by Miyamoto et al. As discussed above, Miyamoto et al. teaches separate processors. Since this subject matter is not taught by either Kudo or Miyamoto et al., clearly, it is not taught by the combination of these references. Nor does any such combination disclose, teach, or even suggest the remainder of Claim 1, which recites a data storage medium coupleable to the control unit, the data storage medium storing a second program implementable by **the processor** for: (i) retrieving information pertaining to the first program from the memory; and (ii) utilizing the information pertaining to the first program with the execution of the second program, the processor being the one included in the control unit that also includes the memory.

In summary, clearly, the subject matter of Claim 1 is not taught or suggested by either Kudo or Miyamoto et al., taken alone or in combination. As a result, applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1 and all of the claims dependent therefrom (2-5) are clearly allowable.

Regarding Claim 3, the Office Action states:

As [to] claim 3, Kudo teaches identifying information pertaining to the second for sharing with the first program (Col. 10, Ln. 47-49) and requesting storage of the information pertaining to the second program in the memory for retrieval by the first program (Col. 10, Ln. 61-67).

Ignoring, for purposes of brevity, the accuracy of the foregoing, it ignores significant recitations of Claim 3. In this regard, Claim 3 reads as follows:

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS^{PLC}
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

3. The system of Claim 1, wherein the second program implementable by the processor:

- (i) identifies information pertaining to the second program for sharing with the first program; and
- (ii) requests storage of the information pertaining to the second program in the memory for retrieval by the first program.

As clearly stated, Claim 3 recites that the second program is implementable by the processor, the processor being the processor that forms part of a control unit that also includes a memory for storing information pertaining to a first program that was previously executed by the processor. The processor identifies information pertaining to the second program for sharing with the first program and requests storage of the information pertaining to the second program in the memory for retrieval by the first program. The memory is, as noted above, the memory that stores information pertaining to the first program that was previously executed by the processor. Clearly, this subject matter is not taught or suggested by Kudo. As a result, applicants respectfully submit that Claim 3 is allowable for reasons in addition to the reasons discussed above why Claim 1 is allowable.

With respect to Claim 4, the Office Action states as follows:

As to claim 4, Kudo teaches identifying information pertaining the second program for sharing with a third program (Col. 11, Ln. 6-10, Permission Means 51 Col. 12, Ln. 26-30) and requesting storage of the information pertaining to the second program in the memory for retrieval by the third program (Col. 11, Ln. 6-10, Step 260 Col. 14, Ln 1-15, Col. 14, Ln. 46-52).

Applicants respectfully disagree with the foregoing statement. The referenced portions of Kudo clearly do not disclose identifying information pertaining to a second program for sharing with a third program and requesting **storage** of the information pertaining to the second program in a memory (associated with a processor as recited in Claim 1) for retrieval by a third program. Consequently, applicants respectfully submit that when the subject matter of Claim 4 is considered in combination with the subject matter of Claim 1, the claim from which Claim 4 depends, the overall combination is clearly not taught or suggested by Kudo in combination with Miyamoto et al. and, thus, is clearly allowable for reasons in addition to the reasons why Claim 1 is allowable.

With respect to Claim 5, the Office Action states that Kudo does not teach a nonvolatile random access memory and suggests that Miyamoto et al. teaches such a memory. Regardless of the accuracy of this statement, even if correct, which applicant denies, it is clear that when the

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESSTMAC
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

subject matter of Claim 5 is considered in combination with the subject matter of Claims 3 and 1, the claims from which Claim 5 depends, the overall combination is not taught or suggested by Kudo, taken alone or in combination with Miyamoto et al. As a result, applicants submit that Claim 5 is also allowable for reasons in addition to the reasons why Claims 1 and 3 are allowable.

With respect to Claims 6-12, the Office Action states that these claims are rejectable on the same grounds as Claims 1 and 3, 1, 2, 3, 3, 2 and 4, respectively. Applicants respectfully disagree. Of this group of claims, Claim 6 is an independent claim which reads as follows:

6. A system for sharing data between software programs comprising:
 - (a) a control unit having a processor and a memory coupled to the processor; and
 - (b) a first data storage medium coupleable to the processor, the first data storage medium storing a first program implementable by the processor for:
 - (i) identifying information pertaining to the first program for sharing with a second program; and
 - (ii) requesting storage of the information pertaining to the first program in the memory for retrieval by the second program.

As discussed above, particularly with respect to Claim 3, it is clear that neither Kudo nor Miyamoto et al. teaches a storage medium that stores a program implementable by a processor for identifying information pertaining to a first program for sharing with a second program and requesting storage of the information pertaining to the first program in a memory (included in a control unit having a processor) for retrieval by the second program. As a result, applicants respectfully submit that Claim 6 and all the claims dependent therefrom (7-18) are clearly allowable in view of the teachings of Kudo and Miyamoto et al. taken alone or in combination.

Applicants submit that dependent Claims 7-18 are also allowable for additional reasons. For example, Claim 7, which depends from Claim 6, recites a second data storage medium that, among other things, retrieves information pertaining to the first program from the memory (included in a processor of a control unit, as recited in Claim 6). As discussed above, this subject matter is not taught or suggested by Kudo taken alone or in combination with Miyamoto et al.

Claim 8, which depends from Claim 7, recites that the second program verifies the validity of the retrieved information prior to utilizing the retrieved information and the execution of the second program. As discussed more fully below with respect to Claim 2, this subject matter is not taught or suggested by Kudo or Miyamoto et al. Nor is it taught by Ng. Thus,

Claim 8 is submitted to be allowable for reasons in addition to the reasons why Claims 6 and 7 are allowable.

Claim 9, which depends from Claim 7, recites that the information pertaining to the first program affects the second program and causes the second program implementable by the processor to produce information pertaining to the second program for sharing with the first program and request storage of the information pertaining to the second program in the memory (associated with a processor of a control unit, as recited in Claim 6) for retrieval by the first program. As discussed above, this subject matter is not taught or suggested by either Kudo or Miyamoto et al. Thus, applicants submit that Claim 9 is allowable for this additional reason.

Claim 10, which depends from Claim 9, recites that the first program implementable by the processor further retrieves information pertaining to the second program from the memory (associated with a processor of a control unit, as recited in Claim 6) and utilizes the information pertaining to the second program with the first program. As discussed above, this subject matter is not taught or suggested by either Kudo or Miyamoto et al., taken alone or in combination. Thus, Claim 10 is also submitted to be allowable for this additional reason.

Claim 11 depends upon Claim 10 and recites the first program implementable by the processor verifies the validity of the retrieved information pertaining to the second program prior to utilizing the retrieved information pertaining to the second program and execution of the first program. As is discussed more fully below with respect to Claim 2, this subject matter is clearly not taught or suggested by either Kudo, Miyamoto et al, or Ng, taken alone or in combination.

Claim 12 is dependent upon Claim 7 and recites that the information pertaining to the first program affects the second program causing the second program implementable by the processor to: (i) produce information pertaining to the second program for sharing with a third program; and (ii) request storage of the information pertaining to the second program in memory (associated with a processor of a controller unit, as recited in Claim 6) for retrieval by the third program. As discussed above, this subject matter is also not taught or suggested by either Kudo or Miyamoto et al. As a result, applicants respectfully submit that when the subject matter of Claim 12 is considered in combination with the subject matter of Claim 7, the combination is clearly not taught or suggested by Kudo or Miyamoto et al., taken alone or in combination, and, thus, Claim 12 is allowable for reasons in addition to the reasons why Claims 6 and 7 are allowable.

Claim 13 is dependent upon Claim 7 and recites that the first data storage medium as a first game cartridge storing a first video program and the second data storage medium is a second

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS^{PLC}
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

game cartridge storing a second video game program. With respect to Claim 13, the Office Action states:

As to claim 13, Kudo teaches a First Game Cartridge (Recording Medium 30, Col. 10, Ln. 38-49, Col. 9, Ln. 17-19), a First Video Game Program ("...first game content...", Col. 10, Ln. 38-49), Second Data Storage Medium (Recording Medium 30, Col. 10, Ln. 38-49, Col. 9, Ln. 17-19), a Second Video Game Program ("...second game content...", Col. 10, Ln. 38-49).

Ignoring for purposes of brevity whether or not the foregoing is an accurate recitation of the teachings of Kudo, even if correct, which applicants deny, the alleged teaching does not anticipate the subject matter of Claim 13. More specifically, Claim 13 recites, as noted above, first and second storage medium **each formed** by first and second game cartridges storing first and second video game programs, respectively. While Kudo may teach first and second game programs, Kudo does not teach first and second game cartridges. As a result, applicants respectfully submit that Claim 13 is clearly not anticipated by the teachings of Kudo taken alone or in combination with Miyamoto et al., particularly when the subject matter of Claim 13 is considered in combination with the subject matter of the claims from which Claim 13 depends, namely, Claims 6 and 7. Thus, applicants submit that Claim 13 is allowable for reasons in addition to the reasons why Claims 6 and 7 are allowable.

Claims 14-18 all depend directly or indirectly from Claim 13 and, consequently, are allowable for at least the reasons that Claim 13 is allowable. As a result, regardless of the accuracy of the statements regarding these claims set forth in the Office Action, applicants submit that when the subject matter of these claims is considered in combination with the subject matter of the claims from which these claims depend, these claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as Claim 13. In addition, many of the claims are allowable for additional reasons. For example, many of the claims recite storing events in memory for retrieval. As noted above, neither Kudo nor Miyamoto et al. teaches a memory and a processor forming a controller unit, the memory storing events of the type recited in these claims, much less the retrieval of events from such a memory.

Claim 19 was rejected in the Office Action on the same grounds as Claim 1. Applicants respectfully disagree. In this regard, Claim 19, which is an independent claim, reads as follows:

19. A method for sharing information between at least two software programs implementable by a processor, the method comprising:
connecting a first data storage medium having a first program stored therein to said processor;

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS^{PLLC}
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

transferring data pertaining to a first program to a memory coupled to the processor;

connecting a second data storage medium having a second program stored therein to the processor; and

retrieving the data pertaining to the first program from the memory coupled to the processor and then using said data in connection with the second program.

As generally discussed above with respect to Claim 1 and other claims, neither Kudo nor Miyamoto et al. teaches transferring or storing data pertaining to a first program in a memory coupled to a processor or retrieving data from such a memory. As a result, applicants respectfully submit that Claim 19 and all the claims dependent therefrom (20-27) are allowable. Applicants submit that many of the dependent claims are allowable for additional reasons generally discussed above with respect to related claims depending from Claims 1 and 6. Consequently, applicants respectfully submit that these claims are allowable for reasons in addition to the reasons why Claim 19 is allowable.

Claim 28, like Claim 19, was rejected in the Office Action for the same reasons that Claim 1 was rejected. Again, applicants respectfully disagree. Claim 28 reads as follows:

28. A data storage medium containing a software program that when implemented by a processor performs the following functions:

(a) retrieves information, if any, provided by another software program from a memory coupled to the processor; and

(b) utilizes the retrieved information, if any, in conjunction with said software program.

As discussed above with respect to other of the independent claims, neither Kudo nor Miyamoto et al., taken alone or in combination, teaches or suggests retrieving information provided by another software program from a memory coupled to a processor executing a software program. While Kudo and Miyamoto et al. appear to disclose retrieving information, they do not teach retrieving information provided by another software program from a memory coupled to a processor. Miyamoto et al. discloses, as discussed above, separate processors. Kudo does not disclose storing software information in a memory coupled to a processor for retrieval in connection with another software program. As a result, applicants respectfully submit that Claim 28 and all the claims dependent therefrom (29-31) are also allowable. Dependent Claims 29-31 include additional recitations that make these claims further allowable for reasons discussed above with respect to other dependent claims containing related subject matter.

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS^{PLLC}
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

The Office Action rejected Claim 32 on the same grounds as the rejection of Claims 1 and 3. Again, applicants respectfully disagree. Claim 32 reads as follows:

32. A data storage medium containing a first software program that when implemented by a processor performs the following functions:

- (a) identifies information for sharing with a second software program;
and
- (b) stores the identified information in a memory coupled to the processor for retrieval by the second software program.

As discussed above, neither Kudo nor Miyamoto et al. teaches identifying information for sharing with a second software program and storing the identified information in a memory coupled to the processor for retrieval in connection with a second software program. As a result, applicants respectfully submit that Claim 32, and Claim 33 which depends from Claim 32, are also allowable.

With respect to Claim 33, neither Kudo nor Miyamoto et al. teaches retrieving information provided by a first software program from a memory coupled to a processor and utilizing the retrieved information in the implementation of the second program. While these references arguably teach utilizing retrieved information in the implementation of a second software program, they do not teach retrieving the information provided by a first software program from a memory coupled to a processor. As a result, applicants respectfully submit that Claim 33 is allowable for reasons in addition to the reasons why Claim 32 is allowable.

Claim 2

As noted, Claim 2 was rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), based either on the teaching of Kudo and Ng (paragraph 3) or based on the teachings of Kudo, Miyamoto et al., and Ng (paragraph 4). As also noted above, in contrast to the statement made in paragraph 4 of the Office Action, Ng does not teach verification of the validity of retrieved information before using the information. At best, Ng teaches verification of the authenticity of a cartridge, which is much different. As a result, applicants submit that Claim 2, which depends from Claim 1, is allowable for reasons in addition to the reasons why Claim 1 is allowable.

Conclusion

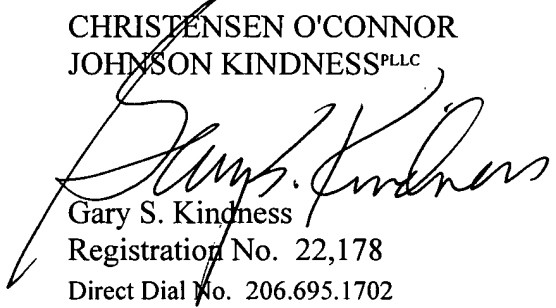
In summary, applicants respectfully submit that, contrary to the Office Action, neither Kudo nor Miyamoto et al., taken alone or in combination, or in combination with Ng, teaches or suggests the subject matter of the claims remaining in this application. Consequently, early and

LAW OFFICES OF
CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR JOHNSON KINDNESS^{LLC}
1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

favorable action allowing these claims and passing this application to issue is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

CHRISTENSEN O'CONNOR
JOHNSON KINDNESS^{PLLC}

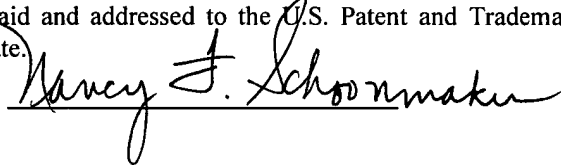


Gary S. Kindness
Registration No. 22,178
Direct Dial No. 206.695.1702

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service in a sealed envelope as first class mail with postage thereon fully prepaid and addressed to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 2327, Arlington, VA 22202, on the below date.

Date:

3/27/03



Nancy J. Schoonmaker

GSK:ejh/nfs

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE MARCH 27, 2003

In the Specification:

The paragraphs beginning on page 10, line 5, and ending on page 11, line 20, have been amended as follows:

Beginning with a step [30]50, a test is made to determine whether a first game cartridge is connected to a video game console. If a first game cartridge is not connected, the system continues to check for one as shown in FIGURE 6.

On the other hand, if a first game cartridge containing programming information for a first video game program is connected to the console, the processor 12 acts under control of the first video game program. Then, at a step [32]52, the video game system determines whether a trigger event has occurred indicating the existence of information for storage in a universally accessible location of the memory 16. For example, while playing the first video game, a player may reach a certain stage in the first video game where the player recognizes a common feature from a second video game[,] (which the player has obviously played before). As an example, the player may come across a "Huge Blocked Icy Cave" in which there is a key-shaped hole. Unfortunately, the player can find no way or key to enter the Huge Blocked Icy Cave of the first video game. At the side of the Huge Blocked Icy Cave is a lever. The player pulls the lever and a "cut-cam" shows a section from the second video game stored on a second game cartridge. This cut-cam may reveal a door access to a "Big Icy Key." If the player remembered playing the second video game, the player may have seen this area that could not have been accessed at that time. In this example, the trigger event occurs when the lever is pulled.

If the system determines that a trigger event has not occurred, it continues to query for such trigger events as shown in FIGURE 6. However, if the system determines that a trigger event has occurred, the processor 12 then writes information pertaining to the trigger event into its memory 20. In this regard, the processor 12 sets a flag indicating the occurrence of the event, i.e., that the door to access the Big Icy Key in the first video game has been opened, as shown at step [34]54.

Then, at a step [36]56, the system tests for whether the first game cartridge has been removed. If not, processing returns to step [30]52 and the steps described above are repeated. If it has been removed, the system tests for whether the second game cartridge has been connected to the console at a step [38]58. If no connection has been made, the system continues to make

this query. If the second game cartridge is connected, the processor 12 executes the second video game program and also reads and utilizes, if applicable, any trigger events stored in the memory at a step [40]60. For example, once a player inserts the second data cartridge containing the second video game he remembers playing, the player can go into the area of the game that had the Big Icy Key. Once in that area, the player would see that the door had been opened and would be able to get the key. Thus, once the second game cartridge is inserted, the processor utilizes the software of the second game cartridge in addition to the flagged information from memory 20, transferred from the first game cartridge, in order to make a change which affects the playing of the second video game.

After the video game system reads and utilizes, if applicable, the flagged information stored in memory 20 at step [40]60, processing returns to step [32]52 and the steps described above are repeated, permitting the second game cartridge to store information in memory 20 for retrieval by the first or other game cartridge. Thus, in accordance with the above example, once the player retrieves the key in the second video game, the processor sets another flag in memory 20 to signal that the Big Icy Key has been recovered from the first game cartridge. If the player then removes the second game cartridge from the console and replaces it with the first game cartridge, the player will be able to return to the Huge Blocked Icy Cave with the icy keyhole and open the sealed cave with the Big Icy Key that has been recovered from the second game cartridge. Thus, the player is now able to access this new area beyond the icy cave.

In the Claims:

4. The system of Claim 1, wherein the first program [implementable] previously executed by the processor:

- (i) identifies information pertaining to the second program for sharing with a third program; and
- (ii) requests storage of the information pertaining to the second program in the memory for retrieval by the third program.

Claims 34-36 have been canceled.